

Serial No. 09/965,570
Atty. Doc. No. 01P17904US

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in the application. In light of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims.

Rejection of Claims 1-15 Under § 103

Claims 1-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Applicants' Prior Art, U.S. Patent No. 1,227,414 ("Field") and U.S. Patent No. 4,827,597 ("Hein"). For the following reasons, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The wedges disclosed by Field and Hein are stator wedges. Applicants' invention is directed to rotor wedges. Stator wedges and rotor wedges have very different application requirements. For stator wedges, magnetic properties are a priority. For rotor wedges, strength is a priority. Traditionally, rotor wedges have been constructed from solid metal bars. Stator wedges, on the other hand, like the ones disclosed in Field and Hein, are generally constructed of laminated segments. Laminated segments are generally not strong enough to withstand the centrifugal forces exerted on rotor wedges.

Applicants submit that one of skill in the art would not have been led to combine the prior art in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Field and Hein actually teach away from such a combination because a "substantially solid, extruded wedge body" would not have suitable magnetic properties for a stator wedge. In addition, the Examiner has failed as of yet to identify a specific suggestion or motivation in the cited references that would have led one of skill in the art to combine stator wedges with rotor wedges in the manner suggested.

Applicants' claimed invention utilizes a "substantially solid, extruded wedge body" with a hollow cavity that reduces the weight of the wedge while keeping substantially the same strength

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properties. By reducing the weight of the rotor wedge, the improved rotor wedge makes it possible to add additional weight elsewhere in the rotor, for example, by adding conductor capacity to increase the current-carrying capacity of a generator. Applicants respectfully submit that the combination suggested by the Examiner is simply hindsight reconstruction of Applicants' invention using Applicants' own teachings. Moreover, simply the fact that others have failed to address or identify the problem solved by Applicants' improved rotor wedge is strong evidence of nonobviousness.

In order to further differentiate Applicants' rotor wedge from the cited prior art, independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended to clarify that Applicants' rotor wedges are formed from "a substantially solid, extruded wedge body." Based on at least this novel and unobvious difference between Applicants' invention and the prior art feature, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of claims 1-15.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-15. Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this paper or application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve such issue or question.

The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

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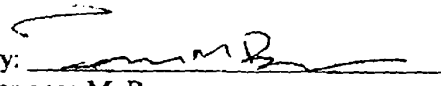
SIEMENS WESTINGHOUSE

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Respectfully submitted,

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